

## **7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group**

The 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group was first constituted in the Army of the US Army on 6 July 1942 as the 7<sup>th</sup> Port of Embarkation and was activated at Army Base, North Charleston, South Carolina, on 12 July 1942. On 31 July 1942, the Transportation Corps was created and the 7<sup>th</sup> Port of Embarkation was made a part of the Transportation Corps.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Port was assigned to the United Kingdom on 7 March 1944 and given operation control of the Ports of Glaslow and Belfast until 1945. During July and August 1945, the 7<sup>th</sup> Port moved to Kobe, Japan. The 7<sup>th</sup> Port was redesignated as the 7<sup>th</sup> Medium Port on 30 June 1946 and performed normal activities until its inactivation on 5 December 1946.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Medium Port was once again activated on 9 March and ordered to the Far East, arriving in Korea on 30 August 1950 to operate in the Port of Pusan. On 27 March 1954, it was redesignated 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Port Command C. The command was inactivated in Korea on 24 June 1955.

In 1965, the US Army assumed a greater role in the ground war in Vietnam. The buildup of troops in three increments during 1965, 1966 and 1967 depleted the CONUS bases of most of their transportation units. New transportation units had to be activated to take their place. On 4 May 1966, the 7<sup>th</sup> Port was redesignated as the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Command (Terminal B) and reactivated on 1 July 1966 as a major subordinate command of the US Army, Virginia. On 22 November 1970, the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Command (Terminal B) was redesignated the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Terminal).

After the Vietnam War, Transportation battalions at Fort Eustis and Story were reflagged as 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> Battalions because they had distinguished service during the Vietnam War. On 8 August 1978, Major General Oren De Haven assumed command of Fort Eustis. He discovered that the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group and the 38<sup>th</sup> Battalion had not served in Vietnam. He requested that the 38<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion be reflagged the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion. In September, he also requested that the 7<sup>th</sup> Group be reflagged as the 48<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group for the same reason. His request was denied.

### Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM

On 9 August 1990, the soldiers of the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group, based at Fort Eustis, Virginia, Received an early wake-up call. This event, triggered by tumultuous events in the Middle East, was the beginning of the greatest deployment in history; Operation Desert Shield.

The leaders of the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Terminal Service), then-commanded by LTC James S. Ebertowski, knew early on that they would be a big part of this operation. In their pre-deployment briefings they learned that most unit equipment, ammunition and sustainment cargo for the Kuwait Theater of Operations would flow through the King Abdul Aziz port in Damman, Saudi Arabia. This was a very well developed port, with numerous berths, large staging areas, sophisticated container handling equipment and shore-side cranes to handle ammunition, vehicles and break-bulk cargo. Additionally, the

harbor is deep enough to handle Fast Sealift Ships, which would bring in many of the tracked and wheeled vehicles for the deployment.

Armed with this information, a 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group surge/advanced party deployed to Saudi Arabia on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August. The advanced party consisted of select officers and NCOs from the 24<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalions. The 551<sup>st</sup> transportation Company (Cargo Transfer), commanded by Captain Johnny Sawyer, made up a large part of the advanced party. This versatile unit, assigned to the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion for “the duration”, would be a vital part of the deployment.

When the advanced party arrived in Saudi Arabia they found themselves in a very fast paced, fluid environment. Lieutenant General William G. Pagonis, the 22d SUPCOM (TAA) Commander, was in charge of all support for the rapidly developing theater. However, his staff was not yet in-country. Much of the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion staff was drafted to help from the fledgling SUPCOM staff. For several weeks, lieutenants did the jobs of lieutenant colonels; sergeants, the jobs of captains. The 551<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company ran the A/DACG at Dhahran Air Base, where over five-thousand soldiers arrived daily. 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group staff officers and noncommissioned officers also worked at the airfield, coordinating with host nation authorities for cargo trucks and buses to move incoming soldiers to their field sites.

Meanwhile, the balance of 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group and 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion coordinated with authorities at the Port of Damman for follow-on military operations at the port. Ships containing prepositioned equipment and ammunition previously stored at Diego Garcia were already steaming for Saudi Arabia. As the month of August drew to a close, the 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion staff filtered out of SUPCOM and back into the port. The 551<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company mission also shifted from the airfield to the port, where they took on the job of warehousing and shipping massive amounts of ammunition.

#### Operation RESTORE HOPE, Somalia

In January 1991, the Communist regime of Mohammed Siad Barre collapsed in Somalia and the country was torn apart by civil war. The famine situation added to the crisis and the war caused a total collapse of the government infrastructure which could not deliver the food aid arriving at the port to the growing refugee population which needed it. The transportation infrastructure completely broke down as tribal warlord fought over control of the most precious commodity in the famine ridden country of Somalia – food. The United Nations began to airlift humanitarian aid to the worst famine stricken areas of Somalia and Kenya in August 1992. They needed to establish a transportation network to deliver the aid from the port to the humanitarian organizations throughout the country.

In December 1992, a Marine Expeditionary Unit landed and secured the port Mogadishu then the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group deployed two battalion task forces to Mogadishu to deliver humanitarian aid to the humanitarian relief organizations. The advance parties of the 6th Transportation Battalion, under the command of LTC James R. Chalkley, deployed with the 24<sup>th</sup> Terminal Battalion to Somalia in support of Operation RESTORE

HOPE on 20 December 1992, just prior to Christmas. The 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion ran port operations while the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion cleared the port. The main force of the battalion deployed 4 January 1993 and providing line haul, airfield, and driving support to the United Nations and Coalition Forces.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Task Force opened the airport with an Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group (A/DACG) and provided cargo transfer support and conducted port clearance and onward movement with line haul motor transports. The 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group Task Force provided command and control for the two battalions, under the Joint Task Force Support Command.

To operate the port, the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion had to finish a massive port rehabilitation started by the Navy and Marines. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion's dive detachment also moved sunken tugs and patrol boats from the piers to open critical berthing space. While the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion set about opening the port, the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion initially established its headquarters at the Mogadishu Airport and moved 6,000 tons of cargo and 8,268 passengers.

After a month, it moved to Baledogie, on the outskirts of an old Soviet airfield. The soldiers called it "Firebase SNAFU" from a term from World War II, Situation Normal, All Fouled Up. The companies set up camps in different areas. Initially, the biggest problem that the convoys face driving through the streets of Mogadishu was theft. The Rules of Engagement only permitted the use of lethal force to defend lives, not protect property. The starving Somalis figured very fast that they would not be shot for stealing. After trial and error with everything from chicken wire to axe handles, the drivers finally learned that pepper spray worked best. By the middle of February Ali Mahdi turned over his technicals (crew served weapons mounted on pick ups) over to United Task Force (UNITAF) control and the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion relocated them to an area where they could be rehabilitated for use by the Somalia National Police.

After 60 days, the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion returned to Fort Eustis with its two companies and turned the A/DACG operation over to Task Force 24, then under the United Nations Somalia (UNISOM) control. The last element of the battalion returned in March 1994.

#### Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, Haiti

President Clinton pressured the military junta in Haiti to turn the government over to the duly elected president, Jacque Aristeed. The military junta held out to the last possible moment. The initial plan for Haiti was a forced entry. The planners expected the Haitian military to obstruct the seaport, so they needed LOTS capability and a port opening package delivered by watercraft.

A flotilla of Army watercraft from 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalions (Terminal) sailed down to Haiti. The LCU 2000s of the 329<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Heavy Boat), 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion joined the LCUs of the 97<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Heavy Boat), LT801 (towing BD6701) of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company and LSV1 and LSV4 of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion set sail on 13 September 1994 to form the largest flotilla of watercraft in

convoy since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Since the majority of the watercraft belonged to the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, it provided command and control of the task force.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion was configured for forced-entry. The boats were uploaded with the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group port opening package of rolling stock (vehicles) for any contingency. They took the sectional floating causeway and BD heavy crane in the event that the Haitians sabotaged the port.

The convoy initially anchored off of the coast of North Carolina at 0800 and waited for the other vessels. The LCUs, LT801, LSV1 and LSV4 sailed as a convoy to Haiti in two serials. CW3 John Marino, vessel master of LSV1, commanded the first serial and CW5 Brewster, vessel master of LSV4, commanded the second serial, which consisted of the LCUs of the 97<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company. MAJ Thomas Baker, XO of the 10<sup>th</sup> Terminal Battalion, was designated the Task Force/Convoy Commander. MAJ Baker rode with the first serial and remained at Third Port for the latest possible intelligence on the situation before leaving. The first serial sailed past the second serial at 1930 on 13 September. The second serial joined up behind the first and sailed under radio silence except for navigational aids.

At 0040 on 18 September, the convoy arrived at Grand Turk Islands in the Bahamas and went into a holding area. The vessels just sailed around in a big square for 10 hours. They stopped there to pick up three LCUs loaded with 5,000-gallon fuel tankers. These vessels had left three to four days prior to the others to support refuel operations for air operations. They also picked up commercial tugs and an FSS ship, *Nashville*. The *Nashville* was loaded with combat equipment and vehicles for the US Marines. The fleet departed at 1050 that night.

The fleet arrived at Port Au Prince at 0400 on 20 September. By that time the military junta had agreed to step down from power and allow Jacque Aristeed to become president of Haiti. They also agreed to allow the US Armed Forces to use its ports. There was no longer a need for a forced-entry. Much of what was taken down would have to return. LSV4 was that last vessel to discharge its cargo and rolling stock. It discharged 21 pieces of equipment and picked up 9 pieces and 15 stevedores for opening the port.

Three of the LCUs from the 329<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company had received the mission to deliver aviation fuel and maintenance support to Great Inagua Island by D-5. The XVIII Airborne Corps planned to operate a forward area rearm and refuel point (FARP) and an aviation intermediate maintenance (AVIM) site on the island's airstrip. The three LCUs picked up eight 5,000 gallon fuel tankers containing JP5 aviation fuel; a D7G bulldozer; a 10K forklift; 40-foot trailers, expando vans, and prime movers; HMMVs and trailers and deploying unit containers.

The LCUs 2013, 2015, and 2016 set sail from Third Port, Fort Eustis, on 12 September with CW2 Pat May as the convoy commander. At 2200 on 15 September, the vessels arrived at their assembly area ten miles off the island. The 329<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company Commander, CPT Gene Piskator, accompanied his three LCUs and went

ashore with CW2 May and four soldiers at 0500 the next morning to survey the beach for a landing. 1<sup>st</sup> COSCOM ordered them to only discharge two of the 5,000-gallon tankers and the aviation maintenance equipment. They discharged this within four hours then set sail for Port-au-Prince.

On 3 October, 1<sup>st</sup> COSCOM tasked the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group to support the Joint Special Operations Force. On 6 October LCUs 2008 and 2023 transported vehicles, equipment and Special Forces and Civil Affairs soldiers west to Jeremie to restore electrical power in the outlying communities across northern and southern Haiti during Operations Light Switch. They dropped their cargo and passengers off the next day and returned.

In a couple of weeks after 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion's original arrival, it was determined that 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion did not need all the watercraft so it sent the vessels of the 329<sup>th</sup> Heavy Boat home. The vessels of the 97<sup>th</sup> Heavy Boat remained. Those LCUs hauled cargo to remote sites and transported troops to R&R beaches. However, the crews of the vessels were not allowed to enjoy the beach facilities and had to eat MREs while the soldiers had barbecues.

#### Operation IRAQI FREEDOM I

HHC 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group, under the command of COL Jim Veditz, deployed to Kuwait on 17 January 2003. Three of its organic battalions, the 6<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, deployed with it. The 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion, from Fort Campbell, Kentucky also joined the 7<sup>th</sup> Group in theater. The initial mission of the Group was to conduct reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSOI) of arriving 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized) and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault). The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was the first to arrive and built Camp Arlington out of an empty piece of desert near camp Arifjan. The 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion discharged vessels at the Port of As Shuaybah while the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion assumed control over the Army watercraft and ran a JLOTS operation at Kuwait Naval Base (KNB). The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved the equipment and classes of supplies to the different staging camps. The 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion assumed responsibility of the Theater Distribution Center, the first operation of its kind in war. The 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion deployed to Turkey to bring in the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized) for the Northern Option.

On 20 March 2003, the coalition forces invaded Iraq. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and 7<sup>th</sup> Group (forward) followed on G+2 right on the heels of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized). That night they reached their destination in the middle of the desert. The next day, the 7<sup>th</sup> Group (forward) moved in to open up the airfield at Tallil Air Base while the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion established Convoy Support Center Cedar with a trailer transfer point on G+5. At the same time, the 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved into the United Nations compound on the Kuwait/Iraq border and established Convoy Support Center Navistar. These two truck battalions provided line haul support for V Corps' drive to Baghdad. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized) stormed Baghdad on 9 April. Since Turkey did not allow American forces to use its country to invade Iraq, the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized) was redirected to Kuwait. The coalition forces had to continue past Baghdad all the way

to Mosul. To support V Corps, the 7<sup>th</sup> Group and the advance party of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion jumped up to Gharma, just 15 miles from Fallujah. The plan was to jump the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion to Gharma, the 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion to Cedar and the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which was brought in from Turkey, to Navistar. However, 3<sup>rd</sup> COSCOM pushed the corps boundary back to Cedar and the 7<sup>th</sup> Group units moved back to their last positions.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Group (USAR) had arrived and was ready to replace the 7<sup>th</sup> Group. The decision was made to redeploy all the active duty units that had participated in the war from the beginning so they could rest up for the next deployment. HHC 7<sup>th</sup> Group, and the 6<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 106<sup>th</sup> Battalions redeployed in July 2003. The 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion replaced the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the Port of As Shuaybah and then completed a one-year tour on the ground in Kuwait.

#### Operation IRAQI FREEDOM 04-06

HHC, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group, under the command of COL Jeff Miser, and HHD, 6<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion deployed to Kuwait for a second time on 6 September 2005. The 7<sup>th</sup> Group completed its transfer of authority on 26 September and assumed responsibility for common user land transportation (CULT) and port clearance from the 375<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group. The 7<sup>th</sup> Group provided command and control over five battalions at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, located at Zone VI (former Camp Arlington) provided command and control over all the HET companies in theater. These proved critical during the deployment and redeployment of units in theater. The 354<sup>th</sup> Battalion, also located at Zone VI, managed the Heavy Lift contracts for host nation transportation. The 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion stationed at Camp Navistar, Kuwait, provided command and control over the long haul assets and the 518<sup>th</sup> Combat Gun Truck Company. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 178<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, garrisoned at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait provided escort platforms for convoys. The 385<sup>th</sup> Battalion provided port clearance at As Shuaybah.

The first challenge for the 7<sup>th</sup> Group was the short notice movement of the United Kingdom Black Watch Brigade to the abandoned Logistical Support Area Dogwood on 25 October. The Black Watch was needed to provide a blocking force south of Fallujah during the offensive operation to clear the city of terrorists. This was the beginning of the “surge” or deployment of units in theater and CULT vehicles, especially HET drivers, were in short supply. The 7<sup>th</sup> Group maximized the use of HETs from the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion and the flatbeds from the 354<sup>th</sup> Battalion to successfully move the Black Watch in the time they desired while still meeting other commitments. They redeployed the Black Watch back to their camp on 5 December, upon successful accomplishment of the operation.

The surge had been a difficult challenge for the 375<sup>th</sup> Group. The 7<sup>th</sup> Group anticipated many of the problems and made some improvements to what they inherited. They invested the LNOs at each of the destinations for the convoys with more authority. All convoys had to check in with the LNOs and only the LNOs could change their mission. The LNOs also coordinated backhauls. 7<sup>th</sup> Group also had the LNOs stock repair parts at each destination and coordinate for repairs of any vehicle breakdowns. Literally a

vehicle could be towed in, repaired over night and back on the road the next morning. This significantly improved operational readiness to over 90%. All of these improvements would become important to meet the next major challenge.

With the Iraqi national elections coming up on 31 January 2005, no units were allowed to redeploy until after that date. Instead of shifting all unit deployment dates to the right from this date, all units scheduled to return after that date wanted to return on schedule. There were just not enough CULT assets available to meet all the requirements. The 7<sup>th</sup> Group accepted the challenge of redeploying every unit according to its desired schedule. The Group first improved upon the computer matrix that managed transportation so that it reflected greater detail and changes. This management tool was able to accurately predict adjustments to loads. Group then pressured units to backhaul any vehicles not needed prior to the elections thus reducing the number of vehicles needed to be retrograded during the surge. The LNOs played a critical role in coordinating back haul. Turn around time was kept to a minimum and improved maintenance kept more CULT vehicles on the road. The drivers performed a Herculean task, driving without breaks for several months getting the units out on time. This achievement by the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group in transportation management ranks up there with the Red Ball Express of WWII.

The convoy ambushes had made truck drivers front line combat troops in this war. There were three significant engagements with the enemy during 7<sup>th</sup> Group's deployment. The first occurred on 18 October 2004 on the ASR Sword. A 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion convoy escorted by the 518<sup>th</sup> Gun Truck Company had halted at an overpass waiting for EOD personnel to clear an IED. Upon the arrival of the EOD HMMWV, the insurgents across from the convoy fired two RPGs at the HMMWV. The gun trucks of the 518<sup>th</sup> turned into the enemy and in two minutes had killed the enemy. After the Battle of Fallujah in November, criminal activity such as hijackings had increased across the border. Members of the original 518<sup>th</sup> Gun Truck Company had formed the 106<sup>th</sup> Route Security Element and patrolled that area. On the night of the national elections, 31 January 2005, the 106<sup>th</sup> RSE encountered enemy elements and engaged them in a long drawn out fire fight that ended with the arrival of the British patrol.

On 20 March 2005, Palm Sunday, a northbound convoy of the 106<sup>th</sup> Battalion escorted by the new members of the 518<sup>th</sup> Gun Truck Company was ambushed on ASR Bismarck. The three convoy escort platforms (CEP) of the 518<sup>th</sup> combined with two CEPs of the 618<sup>th</sup> MPs beat back a determined enemy who had every intention of repeating their success last Easter with the capture of American Soldiers. At the end of the fight, 27 Iraqi insurgents were killed without the loss of one American casualty. This success took the fight out of the enemy for a long time.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade

As part of modularity, the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group was reorganized and redesignated as the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade on 18 October 2006 and became a multi-functional logistics headquarters. Modularity offered a "plug and play" capability to Army sustainment in that a sustainment brigade would not deploy with its peacetime trace battalions, but could pick up battalion headquarters and different companies from across the Army. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB

picked up control of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Movement Control Battalion and created the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Troop Battalion (STB) to its peacetime force structure. Each sustainment brigade was aligned with an active duty division and on 25 January 2008, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade replaced its former shoulder patch with the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division patch. FORSCOM later disapproved of this and made the 7<sup>th</sup> SB replace its patch in April 2008 since every sustainment brigade was required to have its own patch. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group had provided the theater port opening capability, as a modular sustainment brigade it would no longer be tied to the port, but to preserve the port opening capability, the Army created a Theater Port Opening Element.

#### Operation IRAQI FREEDOM 07-09

On 24 September, HHC, 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade (SB) deployed its advanced party to Iraq followed by its main body early the next month on a 15-month deployment. COL Mark Barbosa's 7<sup>th</sup> SB based at Camp Adder former Iraqi Air Base Tallil, the first logistics base across the Kuwait-Iraq border provided command and control over the sustainment operations in Multi-National Division–South (MND-S). The 7<sup>th</sup> SB was originally supposed to deploy to Q-West, but the division commander wanted his sustainment brigade up there. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB replaced the 82<sup>nd</sup> SB with the mission to provide logistics to all forward operating bases south of Baghdad.

The 7<sup>th</sup> SB managed commodities and supported the camps in MND-South which included: Camp Bucca, Camp Echo, Convoy Support Center Scania, Basra Air Station, FOB Delta, and FOB Kalzu. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB kept the units in the green in Calls V (ammo). It pulled supplies from nearby Camp Cedar and sometimes out of Victory Base Complex (VBC) at the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). It conducted both common user land transportation (CULT) missions and sustainment missions. Class I (food) was pulled from Public Warehouse Company (PWC) at Schwaik, Kuwait called Agility Runs.

It fell under the 316<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) at Logistical Support Base Anaconda, but supported the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (TF Marne) in MND-Central. MND-SE belonged to the British and the Australians were the land owners of Tallil. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB had responsibility for ammunition management at FOB Hammer and area support to the FOBs. FOB Echo had the Polish Army and eight other countries, so the 7<sup>th</sup> SB signed for US equipment to issue these foreign units.

The 7<sup>th</sup> SB provided command and control over three battalions: the 142<sup>nd</sup> CSSB, which had the convoy security companies and one line haul company; the 535<sup>th</sup> CSSB which had responsibility for the other services; and the 7<sup>th</sup> SB brought its 7<sup>th</sup> Special Troop Battalion (STB) with responsibility for communications, human resources and finance support. The 1-82<sup>nd</sup> BCT was the camp mayor of Cedar and Tallil but also provided convoy escort for the routine sustainment convoys from

The 7<sup>th</sup> SB inherited a convoy logistical patrol (CLP) Academy from the 82<sup>nd</sup> SB and the 142<sup>nd</sup> CSSB created its own CLP Academy. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB also had a combat life saver (CLS) and radio telephone operator (RTO) Academy which trained coalition partners and KBR.



### Haiti - Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE

On 12 January 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake wrecked havoc throughout Port-au-Prince, Haiti devastating the transportation infrastructure of the city to include the seaport. As the shockwaves rippled across the globe, it set in motion a flow of humanitarian aid and disaster relief back into Haiti. Although successful, this operation revealed how much the Army had forgotten about conducting no notice deployments. It also occurred during the time the Transportation Corps was adjusting to modularity, and the emergence of the Surface Distribution Deployment Center's port opening capability.

Right after the earthquake, LTC Terry Draper, Commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion asked COL Chuck Maskell, Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, to let him load three of his LCUs with equipment to conduct LOTS and sail them to Florida on a training mission in anticipation they could be diverted to Haiti if needed. He knew the scenario well as his battalion had rehearsed a similar humanitarian assistance/disaster relief JLOTS exercise the previous summer. COL Maskell forwarded the request to COL (P) Robin Akin, Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC).

On 15 January, COL (P) Akin directed LTC Draper to deploy to Haiti within the next five days. The 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade also began coordinating with the Navy Beach Group One at Little Creek, which it had worked with during the 2009 JLOTS at Lejune and Guantanamo. The Brigade then sent up its proposed LOTS package. COL (P) Akin also gave permission for the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade to sail down three LCUs, LSV1, LT805, and the BD crane. The US Navy did not feel the Army needed to deploy its sectional causeway in preference for its Improved Navy Lighterage System (INLS). LCU 2006 was coming out of the shipyard on 27 January and LSV1 had just come out both requiring long hours of preparation. Sailing time for vessels was six days and COL Helmick requested two more LCUs from the US Army Reserves to augment the 832<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Battalion. There would be no shortage of Army watercraft.

On 18 January, LTC Terry Draper, 1LT Travis Michelana, CW3 John Stauffer, Harbormaster of 24<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, flew in to assess the capabilities of the port. They flew in a helicopter to the embassy looking for COL Reeves and then drove back with him to the APOD. Upon inspection of the port all agreed it could land at least one landing craft. On 20 January, LCU 2023 finally arrived at Port-au-Prince with the 832<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Battalion's Port Opening Package and on 21 January, LCU 2011 finally arrived and the port pushed out 20 USAID Food for Peace containers to a warehouse for further distribution and the Logistics Over the Shore (LOTS) Operation officially began, nine days after the earthquake. With the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion's vessels arriving the next day, SDDC had won the LCU race to Haiti only because they had the shortest sailing distance. The 832<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Battalion ran the LOTS operation while the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion conducted port clearance.

COL Maskell arrived in Haiti on 23 January; and on 26 January, the 7<sup>th</sup> SB Early Entry Package arrived with MAJ Dominic Gosling (Brit Exchange Officer). The next day the Hawaii Superferry *Huakai* sailed with the 689<sup>th</sup> RPOE and rest of HHC, 7<sup>th</sup> SB.

Maskell and Draper walked the ground of what became Life Support Area (LSA) Sustainer.

The 7<sup>th</sup> SB had a terminal mission at the seaport, a mayoral mission at the LSA, and a distribution mission for moving Humanitarian Assistance and military supplies from the seaport to the LSA and out to other places like the World Food Program. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB had three battalion missions, but only had the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion headquarters. Two weeks into the operation, Draper only had about 50% of his headquarters and Maskell only had about 50% of his. LTC Laura Elliott, Commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Troops Battalion (STB) arrived with her command and control personnel on 1 February and became the mayor of LSA Sustainer.

On 27 February, the second Crowley barge was installed adjacent the north pier and on 1 March, the LOTS officially ended; so the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion began packing up to depart. The main body of the 10<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion redeployed 17 through 19 March and the remainder on 29 March. The 530<sup>th</sup> CSB arrived and on 3 March 56<sup>th</sup> MMB (MED TF) and 530<sup>th</sup> CSSB had moved their TOCs from LSA Sustainer across the street to LSA Hope. The 7<sup>th</sup> SB then turned over operations to the 530<sup>th</sup> CSSB and returned to Fort Eustis.

As a consequence of the Haiti deployment the US Army realized it needed a deployable port opening brigade headquarters capable of conducting JLOTS operations. So in August 2010, Director, Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC) validated the Army Terminal Operations Functional Solutions Analysis (FSA), which identified a gap in global oversight and management of Army watercraft and water terminal capabilities. Subsequent analysis identified an organizational solution for a structure that provided responsive access to terminal operating forces in support of Full Spectrum Decisive Action operations. Augmenting the published FSA and DOTMLPF Integrated Change Recommendation (DICR), the 26 April 2011 ARCIC Initial Capabilities Document (ICD) identified a number of capabilities gaps. Based on these gaps the following base documents were used to develop the operational and organizational capabilities concept for the new Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) (TB(X)): the 17 November 2007 ARCIC approved Army Watercraft Capabilities-Based Assessment (AW CBA); the 9 August 2010 Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) ARCIC approved Army Terminal Operations Capabilities-Based Assessment (ATO CBA); and the 17 September 2011 Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) approved Army Expeditionary Intermodal Operations (AEIO) DICR. The resulting 27 February 2012 ARCIC Organizational Design Paper outlined the way ahead for the new Brigade.<sup>1</sup>

In a ceremony at Third Port, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade was reflagged as a Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary). The reorganization had already taken place and the original activation ceremony was supposed to have taken place on 13 February, but was weathered out. This reorganization was inspired by the need for a port opening brigade headquarters during the Haiti deployment in January 2010. The reorganization of the brigade required the elimination of the Special Troops Battalion (STB), 235<sup>th</sup> Signal

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<sup>1</sup> MAJ Mike Harris, 7<sup>th</sup> TB(X) Port Opening Synchronization Cell (POSC), 10 December 2013.

Company, and the 382<sup>nd</sup> TTOE in January, and will lose the 510<sup>th</sup> Human Resource Company in September 2015. Additionally, the headquarters was reduced from 287 personnel to 109 personnel.